A BALLAD

On the Death of

LOUIS THE UNFORTUNATE,

AFTER THE MANNER OF CHEVY CHACE.

A Description of the Appearance of

MARIE ANTOINETTE'S GHOST

Before the Convention.

A SONNET,

On the French Athestical Motto, "Death is an Eternal Sleep."

AND

An Ode on Greatness.

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.]

BRITISH MUSEUM

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XVI.

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" Death is an Eternal Sleep."

And, An ODE on Greatness.

Tho' they are murder'd, " buried in your dunghills,
" They ſhall be fam'd ; for there the ſun ſhall greet them,
" And draw their honors reeking up to heav'n,
" Leaving their earthly parts to choak your clime,
" The ſmell whereof ſhall breed a plague in *France.*"

SHAKESPEAR.

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M, DCC, XCIII,

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

Unambitious of fame, yet interested in the peace and security of my country, I shall make no apology for offering this little production to the protection of a generous and candid public; who will, I trust, judge of me, not by the imbecility of my lines, but by the rectitude of my motives.

The Author.

BRISTOL,

TUESDAY, DEC. 17, 1793.

" O pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth!
" That I am meek and gentle with theſe butchers.
" Woe to the hands that ſhed thy coſtly blood!
" Over thy wounds now do I propheſie,
" A curſe ſhall light upon the kind of men;
" Domeſtic fury, and fierce civil ſtriſe,
" Shall cumber all the parts of" perjur'd *France*;
" Blood and deſtruction ſhall be ſo in uſe,
" And dreadful objects ſo familiar,
" That mothers ſhall but ſmile when they behold
" Their infants quarter'd by the hands of war,
" All pity choak'd with cuſtom of fell deeds."

SHAKESPEAR.

BALLAD

ON

LOUIS XVI.

GOD proſper long our noble King,
And bleſs this happy iſle:
A mournful tragedy I ſing,
Which *Paris* did defile.

Come, all ye citizens who aim
At reformation here —
French citizens did once the ſame —
Attend, and you ſhall hear.

" Liſt, liſt, oh! liſt," a tale of woe
Theſe lines ſhall now unfold,
Will make your cheeks, like crimſon, glow;
Your blood, like ice, run cold.

A King late reign'd, with gentle rule,
Whoſe breaſt no paſſion ſway'd;
Whoſe temper, eaſy, mild, and cool,
To miſery betray'd.

Unlike the monarchs, who, of yore,
An iron ſceptre held,
And tyraniz'd o'er rich and poor,
By cruelty impel'd;

He lov'd his people, felt their woes,
For enemies could pray:
Yet vile, reforming, miſcreants roſe,
To take his life away.

His blood alone could tame their rage,
Their furious malice quell:
No ſympathy, for ſex or age,
Did in their boſoms dwell.

The tools of Diſcord, fiends of Strife
And Anarchy's rude pow'r,
The ruffian's hand, aſſaſſin's knife,
With murders mark'd each hour.

A band of robbers, traytors, thieves,
In ſolemn council ſate,
Where, oft', each leſſer villain grieves
His mandate is not *fate*.

Humanity ſhrunk back amaz'd,
Smote by the dreadful tale;
Aſtoniſh'd nations, trembling, gaz'd,
And wept, with horror pale.

Much injur'd Prince! ſuperior thou
To their malignant arts;
What calm compoſure on thy brow,
Defy'd their pointed darts.

'Tis well, he cry'd, with dauntleſs breaſt,
When told their dire decree;
I ſoon from all my griefs ſhall reſt,
Then weep not, friends, for me.—

Great, like a King, his fate he bore,
Magnanimous, ſerene;
But deeper anguiſh was in ſtore,
His Children—Siſter—Queen.—

To leave them, ſuccourleſs — forlorn —
In uttermoſt deſpair —
Captives, condemn'd his loſs to mourn,
Was more than man could bear.

At thought of them, a pitying tear,
" Tears ſuch angels ſhed,"
Stole down his cheek, and palid fear
His viſage overſpread.

Not for himſelf, but them alone,
This agony of grief:
Thus ſever'd turtles fondly moan,
Till Death ſhall bring relief.

Torn from his frantic Conſort's heart,
His dying Daughter's face;
Forc'd from his darling Son to part,
Without a fond embrace.

Not tears of Siſter, Child, or Wife,
Could move the ſavage crew:
Behold him, then, depriv'd of life,
Refus'd one ſad adieu.

Inſulted, ſcorn'd, each wiſh deny'd;
Not ſuffer'd e'en to ſpeak:
You came to die, ſtern *Santerre* cry'd,
Whilſt pity touch'd the weak.

Lamented Louis! free from ſtain
Thy character appears;
As gold from fire, thy fame from pain
A brighter ſurface bears.

What, tho' deſtroy'd thy mortal frame,
Thy ſoul no blow receiv'd;
And tho', to their eternal ſhame,
Which ſcarce can be believ'd,

They baſely did refuſe, at laſt,
A moment unto pray'r;
And, when the pangs of death were paſt,
Thy corpſe they would not ſpare:

Yet, now releas'd from this dark vale,
Thy ſpirit upward flies,
Where enemies no more aſſail,
Where merit never dies.——

Here let me pauſe—and o'er the deed
Bid black oblivion roll;
For, oh! what boſom does not bleed,
As mem'ry wakes the ſoul.

But hold—ſay whence theſe diſcords flow'd,
From whence the poiſon'd ſtream?
For Liberty—French boſoms glow'd,
For Liberty, a dream.

For Liberty, a ſhade, a breath,
Which none on earth obtain;
Long ſought, 'tis only found in death;
By guilt—*there* fought in vain.

Miſguided herd, fallacious founds
To ruin you conſpir'd;
For though Equality abounds,
And Liberty's acquir'd:

What have you gain'd but guilt, and ſhame,
Famine, and blood, and ſword;
Eternal infamy and blame,
By Heaven, and Earth abhor'd;

So Angels, from their bleſt abodes,
Plung'd in the dark abyſs;
Rebels, "aſpiring to be Gods,"
Reſign'd for anguiſh — bliſs.

Riſe, Britons, riſe, united riſe,
Defend your King and Laws;
An act ſo black in thunder cries,
And Heav'ns juſt vengeance draws.

Is there a heart ſo baſe, who dares
E'en breathe a private thought,
That *England* by ſuch ſubtle ſnares
To ruin may be brought.

Forbid it, gracious Heav'n, and, oh!
Our happy Iſland bleſs;
And long, my Country, may'ſt thou know,
No ills to need redreſs.

Once more, God bleſs our noble King,
And grant him long to reign;
Let Peace again her olive bring,
And Plenty deck the plain. ——

" When all theſe prodigies conjointly meet,
" We muſt believe, they are portentious things
" Unto the climate that they point upon."

SHAKESPEAR.

MARIE ANTOINETTE'S

G H O S T.

'TWAS midnight drear — the lightning blue
Vivid its forked arrows threw,
And thunder roar'd around:
The frighted maſtiffs howling tones,
Succeeded by deſponding groans,
Increas'd the awful ſound.

A ſolemn — deep — and mournful gloom,
Such as befits the yawning tomb,
Sabled the vaulted ſky;
Owls ſcreech'd mid lonely darkling bow'rs,
Shook were the ancient mould'ring tow'rs,
And bats were hovering nigh.

Shrieks of unhouſel'd ghoſts were heard,
And hideous ſpectres too appear'd;
Earth trembled at the ſight:
The phantoms pale, in grim array,
Stalk'd where the trav'ler's journey lay;
The Moon withdrew her light.——

The ſtormy wind, with furious blaſt,
Struck the poor Pilgrim quite aghaſt;
When, ſudden — all was huſh'd:
Again, the hurricane's rude ſway
Bore, by the roots, old oaks away;
Down rapid torrents ruſh'd.

In ſleep and ſilence lay, reſign'd,
The reſtleſs and the buſy mind;
Paris forgot her woes;——
All but the murd'rous, guilty train,
Whoſe bloody deeds the ſoil diſtain,
Were ſunk in ſad repoſe.

Theſe wretches were in cloſe debate,
Their machinations kept them late,
Rage flaſhing from their eyes:——

When, all at once, the claſh of ſwords
O'erpow'r'd their noiſy, clam'rous words,
The door unhinged flies.

Diſmay'd, with agonizing ſhrieks,
Each, ſtagg'ring, from his ſtation breaks,
Their hearts' blood cold with fear;
When, lo! a ſtreaming, lambent light,
Exhibited a ghaſtly ſight;
Two headleſs trunks appear:

A flaming torch, in either hand,
Fix'd to a ſtately ebon wand,
Majeſtical they bore;
Their flowing garments lightly flew,
Which once were of a ſnowy hue,
Now deeply ting'd with gore.

'Twas poor LAMBALLE—and, ah! dire found!
LOUIS, *le grand Monarque* when crown'd,
Whoſe preſence ſtruck them dumb;
But now a lifeleſs, clay-cold hand,
Touch'd the wan faces of the band,
Whoſe joints were ſtiff and numb.

An icy ſhiv'ring ſeiz'd their veins,
When low a mournful voice complains,
Another ſhade is here!
Deep in their hollow ſpheres, their eyes
Glar'd, like red meteors in the ſkies;
The ſpirit came more near. —

It was a bending female form,
Blaſted, like ſapling in the ſtorm;
Much, ag'd with grief and care:
A veil tranſparent grac'd her head,
A ſable robe her ſhape o'erſpread,
And floating was her hair.

And, in her trembling graſp, ſhe held
Two heads, which Fury might have quell'd;
So piteous did they look:
This is the fair LAMBALLE, ſhe cry'd,
Butcher'd by you, as yet untry'd—
'Tis writ in doomſday-book.

And this — oh! lamentable thought! ——
LOUIS, the once rever'd and fought,
Thy ſacred, Kingly head;

Mangled thy dear, Majeſtic face,
Where yet the lin'aments I trace
Of virtue, nobly bred.

Tremble, ye Caitiffs! I am come,
(Ah! heav'n avert your wretched doom)
To tell you, now I'm dead,
That I, ſecure, in ſafety reſt,
For ever with my Louis bleſt,
And crown'd his glorious head.

Tremble, ye Caitiffs! — tho' a hair
You would not, in compaſſion, ſpare,
You could not reach our ſouls:
Now, in the realms of endleſs peace,
We find each hour our bliſs encreaſe,
Nor dread your chains and goals.

I look with pity on a crew
So deſolate, ſo loſt, as you;
And warn you leave your crimes:
Let Antoinetta's hapleſs fate
Teach you humanity, tho' late,
And point to future times. ——

When murder'd prieſts, and rites profan'd,
Religion ſcoff'd, her altars ſtain'd,
Demand acute revenge;
When blunted Conſcience wakes her ſtings,
And Mem'ry's poiſon'd chalice brings,
When Heav'n reſolves t'avenge;

Remorſe muſt ſure each wretch appal,
If now quite deaf to Mercy's call;
Reflect — whilſt I pourtray
My melancholy pilgrimage,
Which from gay youth led on to age,
E'en from my natal day.

Ah! tranſient ſtate of human things,
Viciſſitudes in life of kings,
In Fortunes varying wheel;
Who can for happineſs confide
In ought that may their courſe betide,
As through this world they ſteal? ——

Unſtable greatneſs — I was born
A Court and Palace to adorn;
All beauteous was my face; ——

Light as the goſſamour I mov'd;
By all admir'd, ador'd, belov'd;
Bedeck'd with every grace.

Regretted, from my Father's land,
A Princeſs fair, and gay, and bland,
And innocent, and young,
Full of deluſive hopes, I came,
Follow'd by many a lovely dame,
And many a flattering tongue.

Splendor and elegance I found,
And fame my praiſes ſpread around,
As wondering crouds ſurvey'd;
Glitt'ring with gems, I ne'er was proud,
But ſmil'd on all who humbly bow'd
Tho' poor, or mean array'd.

Kind — gentle — affable — and meek,
The good of others prone to ſeek,
Still careleſs of my own;
Secure I felt from Fortune's dart,
Which pierc'd too deep, alas! my heart ——
And hurl'd me from a throne.

May maidens fair, in every ſtate,
In every clime, eſcape my fate,
  Nor prize their roſy bloom;
Dangers unſeen encircle round,
On earth unnumber'd foes abound,
  Oft an untimely tomb. ——

'Tis haggard Envy which diſtains
The ſpotleſs fame, and credit gains
  To ruin and betray:
Fatal as death to life's repoſe,
Fatal as canker to the roſe,
  Whoſe heart it eats away.

An unexampled hiſtory
My life, ill fated, will ſupply,
  Replete with ſcenes of woe:
From thence may all mankind perceive
How light the ills for which they grieve,
  And by it wiſer grow.

And you, ambitious, cruel clan,
Diſclaiming ties of God and man,
  Repent, ere ſentence giv'n;

Your guilty ſouls, for endleſs years,
May wander through a thouſand ſpheres,
Nor reach the throne of heav'n. ——

Oh, wretched *France!* unhappy place!
Victim to an uſurping race,
Your pureſt blood is ſpilt!
Sword, rapine, ſickneſs, now devour,
Famine increaſing ev'ry hour,
Each hour new ſchemes of guilt.

My lateſt days I ſpent in tears,
My lateſt ſleepleſs nights in fears,
Venting my wrongs in ſighs;
Envenom'd ſhafts pierc'd my ſad breaſt,
Where hopeleſs grief deſtroyed reſt,
Bereft of all its ties.

Horror of horrors, to relate
The whole of my diſaſt'rous fate, ——
My children — gracious Pow'r!
Phrenzy at their lov'd name awakes,
Deſpair, and Fury with her ſnakes,
My fainting ſoul devour. ——

Light let me touch theſe awful ſcenes;
They're paſt --- and Heaven intervenes,
  Veiling the future ill;
O'er my ſweet unprotected flow'rs,
The balm of comfort healing pours,
  And ſaves, tho' man ſhould kill.

She paus'd — ſhe vaniſh'd from their ſight,
Borne on a cloud of ſilver white;
  Celeſtial notes were heard:
The heads, whoſe locks with blood were ſtain'd,
To their aſtoniſh'd ſight remain'd;
  They ſigh'd, and diſappear'd.

And now a doleful ſilence reign'd,
They ſeem'd in total darkneſs chain'd,
  Breathleſs, upon the ground:
Oh! when their eyes next wake to light,
May their black vices wing their flight,
  And the young Prince be crown'd.

" How gladly would I meet
" Mortality," ——— " and be earth,
" Inſenſible! How glad would lay me down,
" As in my mother's lap! There I ſhould reſt
" And ſleep ſecure; God's dreadful voice no more
" Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worſe
" To me, and to my offspring, would torment me
" With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
" Purſues me ſtill, leſt all I cannot die;
" Leſt that pure breath of life, the ſpirit of man,
" Which God inſpir'd, cannot together periſh
" With this coporeal clod; then, in the grave,
" Or in ſome other diſmal place, who knows
" But I ſhall die a living death?"

MILTON.

SONNET

ON THE MOTTO

" Death is an Eternal Sleep."

WELL may you wiſh, O miſerable men!
Since cancel'd every ſacred, awful tie,
From the cold grave you ne'er may riſe again,
And all exiſtence end when you ſhall die.

But thou, my ſoul, abhor the dreadful thought;
Fly on the wings of morn, their counſels ſhun.
Muſt this fair globe of nature come to nought,
And heav'nly order into ruin run?

Muſt hapleſs mortals ſink in endleſs night,
Moulder to duſt unconſcious of repoſe?
View never more the ſun's tranſcendent light,
And in oblivious ſleep their being cloſe?—

Far hence the impious, petrifying creed,
God has to man immortal life decreed,
He who denies it is a wretch indeed.—

27 AP 58

O D E

ON

GREATNESS.

" O be ſick, great greatneſs,
" And bid thy ceremonies give thee cure.
" Think'ſt thou the fiery fever will go out
" With titles blown from adulation?"

SHAKESPEAR.

HEART! ſpeak thy wiſhes--would'ſt thou be a King?
Would crowns, and thrones, and homage give thee joy?
Shall grandeur all its gorgeous trappings bring,
And majeſterial ſtate thy hours employ?
The ſupple bending knee,
The tongue of flattery,
Have theſe no charms for thee?

No! — all the pageantry of courtly forms,
The ſceptre, ſword, and ball — the ſplendid train —
Would not perſerve the mind from inward ſtorms;
Would not repel the fierce attacks of pain.
Vain pomp I muſt deſpiſe,
Monarchs have enemies:
Far other ſcenes I prize.

Under gilt canopies, the royal head,
Fatig'd with ceremony, ſinks, oppreſt,
And often, reſtleſs, ſighs for labour's bed;
And envies "the poor ſea-boy's" ſweeter reſt!
Diſturb'd with weighty care,
Fearful of treaſon's ſnare;
Theſe ills I could not bear.

If not a King, proud heart! -- a Duke, or Lord,
Some noble ſtation free from toils of ſtate;
Titles of Grace and Earl, ſometimes, afford
A pleaſing ſound, and ſelf-applauſe create.
What! ſhall theſe air-born names
To honor boaſt their claims?
I have ſuperior aims.

And ſhall the hours on earth to me aſſign'd
Be in a round of empty pleaſures ſpent?
And faſhionable follies rule a mind,
Which here for higher purpoſes was ſent:
To learn, to think, to know,
Better each day to grow,
Whilſt ſojourning below?

Heart! learn to be *content!* — 'tis Wiſdom's part:
And ſhould Misfortune deeper wounds infix,
The balm of Virtue will relieve thy ſmart,
And healing Hope with Sorrow's potion mix;
Since, when few years are flown,
Reſign'd — for realms unknown,
Muſt be both cot and throne.

27 AP 58